

SAGE SIGNALS

The Voice of the Nevada Livestock Industry

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91st Joint Annual Convention and Trade Show Announced

by Martin Paris, Nevada Cattlemen's Association Executive Director



The Nevada Cattlemen's Association, in conjunction with the Nevada Land Action Association, the Nevada CattleWomen, and the Nevada Wool Growers Association, is eager to announce this year's convention. The 91st Annual Nevada Cattlemen's Association Convention and Trade Show will be held on November 12-14, 2026, at the Elko Convention "E" Center in Elko, NV. As NCA members around the state gather in Elko, we will celebrate a lifetime of traditions, review and revise policies, receive industry updates, and take the opportunity to enjoy our friends and neighbors.

At the convention members of the Nevada Cattlemen's Association, guest speakers, and vendors who provide services to the beef cattle industry will join

— Continued on page 2 —



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Dave Baker, President, Nevada Cattlemen's Association

Power Generation and Land Use: A Growing Conversation

While driving home from a wedding last week, my wife and I passed the site near Kemmerer, Wyoming, where TerraPower is replacing the retiring Naughton coal-fired power plant with a small modular nuclear reactor (SMR). It was a reminder that America's electric grid is changing rapidly. Since much of the work of the Nevada Cattlemen's Association involves land-use issues, and because nearly everything we do depends on electricity, it is worth looking at how different sources of power compare.

As a general rule, one megawatt (MW) of electricity supplies enough power for about 750 to 1,000 homes, depending on climate and regional demand. TerraPower's Sodium SMR will produce 345 MW and will include a molten salt energy storage system capable of temporarily increasing output to 500 MW during periods of peak demand. The plant will replace a 384-MW coal-fired generating station

while making use of the existing transmission lines and rights-of-way—a practical advantage that reduces both cost and environmental disturbance.

For another comparison, a Gerald R. Ford-class nuclear aircraft carrier generates about 700 MW of electricity—roughly twice the output of the TerraPower reactor—and only needs to refuel about once every 25 years. Years ago, I visited with a Navy veteran who told me he had helped start up one of those reactors while the ship was in San Francisco Bay. His observation was simple: "It can't be too unsafe if they let 20-year-olds do it." While that comment was made with a smile, it illustrates the confidence the U.S. Navy has developed after decades of safely operating nuclear-powered vessels.

The United States is the world's leading producer of nuclear power, with about

— Continued on page 2 —

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

We would like to thank the following people for joining or renewing their membership with Nevada Cattlemen's Association between July 28 and Aug. 25, 2026.
(New members are in bold.)

- **Axiota Animal Health, Shannon Baze**
- Envu Range & Pasture, Justin Hossfeld
- Roche Ranches, Inc., Dusty C. Roche
- USDA Farm Service Agency

UPCOMING EVENTS

Public Lands Council Annual Meeting

- **September 15–17, 2026** —
Copper Mountain, Colorado
Copper Mountain Resort
209 Ten Mile Circle

NCA 91st Annual Convention & Trade Show

- **November 12–14, 2026** —
Elko, Nevada
Elko Convention "E" Center
700 Moren Way
www.nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings/convention-and-trade-show

Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show

- **February 2–4 2027** —
Nashville, Tennessee
Nashville Music City Center
201 Rep. John Lewis Way S

Great Basin Bull Sale

- **February 13, 2027** —
Fallon, Nevada
Rafter 3C Events Center
325 Sheckler Road

NEVADA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION NEWS

Convention: *Continued from page 1*

together to celebrate the Nevada livestock industry. NCA staff and officers are working hard to provide you with a memorable and educational experience. The Trade Show Wine and Whiskey Walk returns during the reception on the evening of November 12th, giving attendees the chance to stop by every booth, sample a wine or bourbon selected by our vendors, and visit with the businesses that serve this industry.

The forms for exhibit booths and sponsorships have been sent out. If you did not receive one of these forms and wish to, please contact us or visit nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings to download a hard copy or complete an online form. The Nevada Cattlemen's Association would like to thank all of our convention sponsors and exhibitors; they help make our event a success.

NCA's policy committees will meet prior to the convention to discuss new issues or resolutions to be proposed and will

also review expiring resolutions. These meetings are the initial step in setting the Association's policies that help guide staff, officers, and members in responding to the various issues that impact Nevada's cattle industry. Participation in the resolution process is a great way to get involved and have your voice heard. For more information on each committee or suggestions on any new or expiring resolutions, please contact the NCA office.

Registration for convention and a tentative schedule will be available at nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings soon, and members will also receive a registration packet in the mail as well. If you are interested in attending, would like more information, or have any questions please call the office at 1-775-738-9214 or email convention@nevadacattlemen.org. Our website is constantly updated with the latest information. We look forward to seeing you all at the convention!

President's Perspective: *Continued from page 1*

19 percent of our electricity generated by 94 nuclear reactors. France, by comparison, generates roughly 70 to 75 percent of its electricity from nuclear energy.

Beyond producing reliable, carbon-free electricity, small modular reactors offer several practical advantages. Because they are factory-built and assembled on-site, they have the potential to reduce construction time, improve quality control, and limit cost overruns. Some designs can reduce output during the day when solar generation is abundant and increase production after sunset, making them an effective partner for renewable energy. Even smaller nuclear microreactors, producing between one and 20 MW, are designed to fit inside shipping containers and could replace diesel generators at remote locations.

Land use is another important consideration. Nuclear facilities require relatively little land compared to utility-scale solar projects. For example, one proposed solar project in Newark and Jakes valleys in White Pine County would generate 1,000 MW (when the sun is shining) while occupying approximately 6,800 acres. The proposed Lonely Road Solar Project, about 10 miles east of Ely, would produce 600 MW while using about 7,400 acres. Geothermal energy also deserves attention because it has a small land footprint while

providing dependable electricity around the clock, regardless of weather conditions. Most geothermal plants produce between 15 and 20 MW.

Demand for electricity is also increasing at an unprecedented pace. One of the biggest drivers is the rapid growth of data centers. In neighboring Millard County, Utah, two enormous data center campuses are under development. The largest, the Joule HP Compute Campus, is planned to require up to 12 gigawatts (12,000 MW) of electricity when fully completed. Initial operations will rely on hundreds of natural gas generators, but long-term plans include battery storage, fuel cells, geothermal energy, and small modular nuclear reactors. To put that in perspective, Utah's current statewide electricity demand averages about 4 gigawatts.

As electricity demand continues to grow, decisions about power generation will increasingly involve more than simply producing enough energy. Reliability, affordability, environmental impacts, and land use will all play critical roles. For those involved in agriculture and public lands, understanding the tradeoffs among nuclear, geothermal, solar, and other energy sources will become increasingly important as we help shape the future of the West.



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Caution:

Arc Welding, Chemicals, and Parkinsonism

By Ron Torell – A Long Time Advocate for Agriculture, Rancher, Retired Extension Livestock Specialist, and Ex-Nevada Cattlemen's Association President

This open editorial is not about arc welding, chemicals, or Parkinsonism. Rather, this first-hand information is intended to serve as a cautionary tale to my friends in agriculture. **Please take the time to follow appropriate safety protocols when welding and applying chemicals.** Failure to do so may lead to **living with Parkinsonism**, a situation I am all too familiar with. The term “Parkinsonism” describes conditions that affect core motor skills like slowed movement (bradykinesia), muscle stiffness (rigidity), resting tremors, gait and balance issues. It also affects non-motor skills like cognitive thinking, sleeping disorders, gastrointestinal and sensory defects. I do not wish this type of disease upon anyone.

Arc welding, particularly flux-cored arc welding, creates heavy particulate fumes containing manganese. Breathing these fumes over time leads to a buildup of manganese in the brain. According to scientific community research studies, long-term exposure to these metal fumes is one contributing factor to Parkinsonism. There are other causes of Parkinsonism including chemical exposure to herbicides and pesticides, environmental factors, genetic inheritance, age and others.

My Dad taught my brother Allen and I how to “stick weld” at an early age. Allen was later diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease as well. We both took welding in High school shop class and didn’t give much thought to the potential hazards we were being exposed to. Perhaps genetics, inhaling fumes from welding over time, or both were contributing factors to us both being seriously impacted later in life. Safety protocols when welding or applying herbicides/pesticides are intended to mitigate the risks that come from long term exposure.

It is recommended to properly clean repurposed metal prior to welding, weld and work in well-ventilated open areas, add exhaust / ventilation fans to one’s shop, wear respirators when required, maintain helmet lenses, wear appropriate clothing including leathers. It is important to stay current on advancements in equipment and technology as they might require taking additional precautions. Unfortunately, I frequently circumvented many of these safety protocols.

Throughout the years I seldom utilized new clean metal. Instead, I searched the bone yard for scraps. These discarded scraps included old lead based painted metal, galvanized pipe, or rusted metal from discarded automobiles, haying equipment and abandoned past projects. As many ranchers do, I re-purposed and transformed scrap metal into new projects.

As I aged, I equipped my shop with arc welders and many other neat tools. My shop improvements did not include an exhaust or ventilation system. In the interest of time, I often skipped or short cut safety protocols. As an example, to compensate for declining eyesight I simply held my head and helmet closer to my welding arc instead of upgrading my helmet to include a magnified Lense. This caused me to breathe in more of the toxic fumes. I welded in closed-in areas without proper ventilation, wore no respirator when I should have. I seldom properly cleaned contaminated metal. Basically, I ignored or downplayed many of the industry safety standards for welding. Frankly, I was reckless.

Over the years, I fabricated some fantastic metal projects and had fun doing them. I am convinced that I am paying the price now for ignoring safety protocols then. I felt I was “bullet proof” and thought “it will not happen to me”. In addition to welding, I often handled and applied agriculture chemicals, another identified cause of Parkinson’s disease. I dismissed the risk here the same as with welding.

Does my story sound familiar to you? Welding and chemical application are essential to agriculture. So is following appropriate safety protocols for each. It is so easy to get lost in the moment of a project whether it is out of artistic fervor for creating something neat out of metal, or whether it is out of necessity that a project just needs to get done. I plead with you, for your own sake, to pause for just a moment and take some precautions reducing the probability that you may suffer later from a disease that will be with you for the rest of your life. Parkinsonism is a slow, lifelong degenerative brain disorder that, among other things, affects cognitive thinking, movement, gait and balance. Please heed this advice, your future quality of life may depend on it.

Similar to contracting lung cancer from smoking cigarettes, one cigarette does not cause cancer. However, a lifetime of smoking cigarettes increases that probability. If you are not currently following welding and chemical application safety-protocols, consider it helpful advice from an old friend who has Parkinsonism disease. I have no one to blame but myself.



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Nevada Beef Council Update — September 2026

Your Checkoff Dollars at Work

By Kori Dover, Director of Food & Nutrition Outreach

Nutrition Education Carries Beef Science into Consumer Choices

A three-ounce serving of lean beef, sliced on top of a strawberry-walnut-spinach salad, does more than add its own protein to the meal. Set them side by side, and the components start working together. The vitamin C in strawberries and spinach can help support the body's absorption of iron, and the heme iron in beef is absorbed more readily than the iron in plants. Beef works alongside the other nutrients to support the value of the ingredients on the plate and in every meal. That doesn't show up in reading a nutrition label. It shows up in how a meal is built, and in understanding how the nutrients in it work together to support health at every stage of life.

Nutrition education funded through the Beef Checkoff works the same way. The impact extends beyond a single event or educational session, helping to shape consumer perceptions of beef and, ultimately, purchasing decisions.

The education extends far beyond the nutrition professionals, health professionals, and chefs who attend our events. Today's consumers are surrounded by nutrition advice, with social media, podcasts, news headlines, and influencers all competing for attention and often sending mixed messages. That makes trusted voices more important than ever. Whether a school nutrition director is planning meals for students, a healthcare professional is counseling a patient, or a chef is creating a recipe for guests, what they learn does not stay in the room. It moves into menus, patient conversations, classrooms, and the people they serve. The Beef Checkoff helps equip these professionals with the science they need to share beef's



nutritional value and help consumers make informed choices.

That message begins with nutrition science. Beef provides high-quality protein, containing all nine essential amino acids that the body cannot produce on its own. Alongside protein, beef provides ten essential nutrients, including iron, zinc, vitamin B12, choline, selenium, phosphorus, and other B vitamins. Together, these nutrients support muscle health, brain function, immune health, and energy metabolism. Its nutritional value becomes even more meaningful as part of balanced meals that include fruits,

vegetables, and whole grains, each contributing nutrients that work together to support overall health.

Good nutrition education is not about delivering the same message to every audience. It is about translation and meeting people where they are. Each professional starts with a different question, but the science behind beef remains the same. The Beef Checkoff helps equip these professionals with the knowledge they need to connect beef's nutritional value with the people they serve. Whether helping a family build a nutrient-dense meal, supporting an older adult focused on maintaining muscle mass, or guiding a young athlete looking for key nutrients to support training and recovery, nutrition education helps connect the science of beef with the real-life choices people make every day.

Like the nutrients working together on the plate, the impact of your Beef Checkoff investment grows through connection. Science matters, but its greatest value comes when it becomes part of the real conversations that help people decide what ends up on their plates.

References:

- National Institutes of Health Office of Dietary Supplements. Iron: Fact Sheet for Health Professionals. Updated September 4, 2025. <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Iron-HealthProfessional/>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. 2013. USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 26. Available at: <https://fdc.nal.usda.gov/>

NEVADA BEEF COUNCIL

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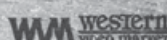
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USDA Designates Eureka County and Lander County Nevada as Primary Natural Disaster Areas Due to Drought with Assistance to 6 Contiguous Counties in Nevada

[August 6, 2026] — This Secretarial natural disaster designation allows the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters through emergency loans. Emergency loans can be used to meet various recovery needs including the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation, or to refinance certain debts. FSA will review the loans based on the extent of losses, security available, and repayment ability.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, these counties suffered from a drought intensity value during the growing season of 1) D2 Drought-Severe for 8 or more consecutive weeks or 2) D3 Drought-Extreme or D4 Drought-Exceptional. Impacted Area: Nevada Triggering Disaster: D3 Drought-Extreme or D4 Drought-Excep-

tional Application Deadline: 03/29/2027

Primary Counties Eligible:

- Nevada: Eureka, Lander

Contiguous Counties Also Eligible:

- Nevada: Churchill, Elko, Humboldt, Nye, Pershing, White Pine

More Resources:

On farmers.gov, the Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool, Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance fact sheet, and Loan Assistance Tool can help you determine program or loan options. To file a Notice of Loss or to ask questions about available programs, contact your local USDA Service Center.

NRCS Offers Disaster Assistance to Agricultural Producers in Nevada Impacted by Wildfire

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has technical and financial assistance available to help farmers and livestock producers recover from recent wildfires.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP provides agricultural producers with financial resources and one-on-one help to plan and implement improvements on the land. While not established specifically for disaster response, the program can assist with immediate recovery needs, such as replacement of damaged infrastructure like fences and water developments and provide long-term recovery assistance through seeding, annual invasive treatment and other activities.

Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)

EWP assists local government sponsors with the cost of addressing watershed impairments or hazards such as debris removal and streambank stabilization.

Eligible sponsors include cities, counties, towns or any federally recognized Native American tribe or tribal organization. Sponsors must submit a formal request (by mail or email) to the NRCS state conservationist for assistance within 60 days of the natural disaster occurrence or 60 days from the date when access to the sites becomes available. For more information, sponsors should contact their local NRCS office.

In addition to EWP, Conservation Technical Assistance is another valuable service that NRCS can provide following a wildfire. NRCS technical assistance can help fire victims with planning cost-effective post fire restoration practices.

Additional USDA disaster assistance information can be found on farmers.gov, including USDA resources specifically for producers impacted by drought and wildfire. Those resources include the Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool, Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet, Loan Assistance Tool, and Natural Disasters and Crop Insurance fact sheet.

For more information, visit or call your local USDA office.

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USDA Acts to Remove Roadless Rule Restrictions That Exacerbate Rising Wildfire Risk

(WASHINGTON, DC, August 18, 2026)

- Today, Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins announced the U.S. Forest Service has filed a proposed rule to rescind in its entirety the national 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule, a one-size-fits-all restriction that has frustrated land managers and served as a barrier to wildfire risk reduction work across large swaths of America's national forests.

"Our forests can't afford another decade of inaction. Across the country, we've watched preventable conditions – overgrown stands, insect outbreaks and disease – turn healthy landscapes into tinderboxes," said Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins. "For too long, outdated restrictions have kept tens of millions of forested acres off-limits to the very treatments that improve forest health and reduce wildfire risk to our communities. Today, we filed a proposal to restore authority to local forest managers who know the land best, removing the barriers that have kept them from doing the work the land demands. It's time to turn the page on the failed roadless rule and return our forests to health and productivity."

For 25 years, the 2001 Roadless Rule restricted road construction and limited the Forest Service's ability to carry out critical active management work within inventoried roadless areas. Today, that includes more than 44 million acres of the 193-million-acre National Forest System. The rescission is intended to prioritize local agency decision-making over regulatory rules that are the same across the country, regardless of specific land management issues and needs.

"This proposed rule is commonsense policy sought since the first Trump administration. In the years since, the need for it has only become more apparent," said Deputy Secretary Stephen A. Vaden. "It is a credit to President Trump that we can begin to put into place a rule that will allow us to properly manage our national forests, because the first step to managing forests is to have access to them."

The agency will seek public comment on the proposal and on a draft of the environmental impact statement filed today in the Federal Register. The rescission removes national designation of roadless areas but does not mandate timber cutting or road construction. The action removes regulatory burden and sends decisions about roadless areas to the local national forest managers.

"Active forest management is not an option. It's essential," said Forest Service Chief Tom Schultz. "More than 40% of inventoried roadless areas, primarily in the West, have high or very high wildfire hazard potential. And only 5% of those areas have received hazardous fuels reduction treatments since 2014. At the same time, more than a quarter of these lands—11.3 million acres—are already near existing roads. Acting now, thoughtfully and decisively, is the best way to restore the balance, reduce wildfire risk, and secure the long-term health of our forests and neighboring communities."

"For 25 years, the heavy thumb of Washington D.C. has hindered Montana's ability to properly manage wildfire risk and road development on nearly 60 percent of Forest Service land across the Treasure State," Montana Gov. Greg Gianforte said. "Today's long overdue decision will empower states like Montana to



Submitted Photo

pursue proper forest management on federal lands with local communities in mind. I'm grateful to President Donald J. Trump and Secretary Rollins for their strong leadership in restoring common sense to active forest management."

"Utahns love our forests, and loving these places means taking care of them," Utah Gov. Spencer J. Cox said. "For 25 years, the Roadless Rule has tied the hands of local land managers with a one-size-fits-all federal policy. Rescinding it restores the flexibility to make thoughtful decisions based on the needs of each forest and each community. We can protect the landscapes we treasure by actively managing them for the next generation."

"Management of our public lands closer to the people that actually live, work, and play there has been a steady drumbeat of mine during my time as Governor of Wyoming. Proper management includes an opportunity to keep our forests healthy and less prone to fire dangers. Wyoming has demonstrated our commitment to sensible stewardship," said Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon. "The USDA and USFS, under the leadership of Secretary Rollins and Chief Schultz, are doing great work recognizing our efforts, making this trust a reality by rescinding the 2001 Roadless Rule. This step reflects a commitment to locally-driven, durable planning and empowering those who know these lands the best."

The proposed rescission reflects the administration's commitment to return authority to local line officers and ensure they have the tools needed to restore forest health and productivity. The rescission aligns with Executive Order 14192, *Unleashing Prosperity Through Deregulation*, to alleviate unnecessary regulatory burdens, Executive Order 14225, *Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production*, Executive Order 14154, *Unleashing American Energy*, and Executive Order 14153, *Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential*.

Returning roadless-area decisions to forest-level land management planning provides flexibility the national rule did not. Future land management decisions would be based on natural resource conditions and needs and informed by states, tribes, and communities. Rescinding the rule allows forest managers to address watershed, economic, and wildfire-risk conditions within the sideboards of existing laws, regulations, and policy. That would put those decisions within the same planning framework that guides individual plans throughout the National Forest System.

More than 95% of inventoried roadless areas are in 10 Western states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The proposed rule does not apply to national forests in Colorado and Idaho because those lands are under separate state-specific roadless regulations.

To comment on the proposed rule and draft environmental impact statement, go to [Regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). Public comments must be received by midnight on Sept. 21. Information will be available Aug. 19 on the Forest Service Roadless Areas webpage: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/planning/roadless>.

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AFBF, LMA, NCBA and USCA Urge President to Reverse Proposed Beef Import Plan

Washington, D.C. (August 26, 2026)—Four of the nation’s leading livestock and agricultural organizations have joined together to urge President Trump to reverse a proposed 90-day import plan they believe would weaken the long-term stability of the U.S. cattle industry.

In a letter sent today, the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), Livestock Marketing Association (LMA),

National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA), and United States Cattlemen’s Association (USCA) called on the Administration to work with industry stakeholders on solutions that keep food affordable while protecting producers, consumers, and strengthening the nation’s ability to produce its own food.

The full text of the letter is below:

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of America’s cattle producers and the broader livestock industry, we write to express our deep concern with your announced plan to import up to 300,000 metric tons of beef over the next 90-days. The stated purpose of driving down beef prices and the commitment to sell it at a price that undercuts domestic supply send a disheartening message to farmers and ranchers across the country.

We share your goal of keeping groceries affordable for American families. However, flooding the market with discounted foreign beef is not the way to rebuild the American cattle herd, strengthen food security, or lower grocery bills in a lasting way. This announcement has already driven cattle markets sharply lower and undermines producers at a critical time of year when they are marketing cattle and making herd-building decisions.

Beef prices are in line with other consumer prices and reflect the inflated cost of raising cattle, grain, and forage. Ranchers and farmers are finally experiencing the strong beef demand needed to invest in their operations after years of drought, high input costs, processing plant disruptions, and other challenges that have reduced cattle numbers. This announcement will discourage investment in the U.S. cow herd and undo the progress producers have made.

We are deeply concerned that this import strategy sacrifices long-term food security for a short-term solution. Americans deserve safe and wholesome beef free from any market distorting actions. There is nothing more American than beef, and we look to your leadership to ensure resilience for our farmers and ranchers, which is the only long-term way to prevent higher grocery costs and maintain control over our food supply.

American cattle producers are asking you for a fair and competitive market, honest price signals, and policies that put U.S. farmers, ranchers, and consumers first. We urge you to reverse course on this 90-day import plan and work with us instead on solutions that strengthen, rather than weaken, America’s capacity to feed itself. We stand ready to work with you on policies that keep food affordable, protect producers and consumers, and preserve a viable future for the U.S. cattle industry.

Respectfully,

Zippy Duvall, President, American Farm Bureau Federation
Joe Goggins, President, Livestock Marketing Association
Gene Copenhaver, President, National Cattlemen’s Beef Association
Justin Tupper, President, United States Cattlemen’s Association

A Plan Makes All the Difference

by Gene Copenhaver, NCBA President

One of the best things we can do as a service to the cattle industry is to ensure the next generation can carry it forward. While succession planning is often one of the most difficult conversations farm and ranch families face, it is also one of the most important. These discussions can be especially challenging for families whose roots run deep on the same land and livestock across generations.

I understand. I'm the fifth generation on my family's cattle farm in Virginia. Without those difficult conversations, I could not have raised my children on the farm and watched my grandchildren enjoy this lifestyle as well. I've been through transition planning with my own children, so I know it is uncomfortable. My son, Will, helps me manage the farm and make business decisions. He will be able to seamlessly take over one day — along with his siblings if they want to return to the operation — because we have already begun the transition process.

I had a long career as an ag lender, and I did financing for a lot of legacy farms. I saw my share of families who never shared the books with the incoming generation of owners. Those operations were faced with preventable challenges when the primary manager passed away, and the loss was compounded by the burden the operation became.

I saw plenty who did it right, too. Those were the people who met with their financial advisors and legal consultants to build frameworks to transition the operation into new hands. They also shared their institutional knowledge with their kids and grandkids to instill confidence in them as they take over the farm. Passing along wisdom, both failures and successes, is just as valuable as passing on land and cattle. We owe it to our loved ones to give them the tools to succeed as cattlemen and women.

Multi-generational operations are vital to our industry, but we also need to assist first-generation farmers and ranchers. In my career, I helped many eager and talented beginning producers access the capital they needed to start an operation. Meanwhile, there are plenty of producers looking to retire who have a lifetime of knowledge to share. We can create pathways for young producers by



connecting these generations through mentorship and transition opportunities. Sometimes, succession planning happens outside the family to give passionate young cattlemen and women a chance to succeed.

Every operation is unique, but I have learned that having a plan makes all the difference. That's why NCBA is focused on giving producers practical tools to get started. This summer, NCBA launched an online learning module that guides families through the steps of transition and helps them tailor a plan to their operation and goals. It is accompanied by a workbook producers can use to assess where they are and develop a plan that is adaptable as the operation evolves.

This resource is one of the ways NCBA is supporting the next generation of cattle producers and industry leaders. NCBA is providing producers with resources, tools and expert insight so we can complete the transition process confidently and before a crisis. Without preparation, we risk losing a lifetime of hard work and leaving our loved ones with a burden.

The cattle business is built on strong people and communities, and it's our responsibility to make sure the next generations carry that forward. Our industry needs young cattlemen and women who are equipped to become owners, managers and leaders.

The future of our industry depends on successful family transition. With 95% of U.S. farms and ranches remaining family-owned, agriculture depends on empowering young producers to continue their family legacies. Using tools like NCBA's new online module and workbook, we can secure business continuity and reduce stress for our families. Our operations are going to undergo a transition at some point, whether we are ready for it or not, so let's be proactive and implement structured plans.

I encourage you to complete the module on NCBA.org, even if you have already started transitioning the farm or ranch. Use the workbook to evaluate your succession plan or as the foundation to create one. I know these conversations can be difficult, but the best gift we can give our children is a clear path forward.

Finding Support for Wildfire Recovery

By the National Cattlemen's Beef Association

In the event of a disaster like wildfire, finding and accessing support is critical to cattlemen and women for recovery, but starting the process can seem daunting. Sometimes, the best way to start is by asking questions. From fellow producers to NCBA members, there is strength in community. For better or worse, this is not a new phenomenon, it's happened before, but so has recovery.

It can be exhausting, frustrating, and will not be an immediate fix, but resources are available from federal, state and local sources. Starting with NCBA or USDA's websites can point producers in the right direction to get processes started to access support through funds, feed and many other programs.

Financial and physical recovery are part of the equation, but mental health cannot go unmentioned in this calculation. Cattlemen and women face stress that is unimageable to many nonfarming men and women. Adding on the pressure

of caring for families, livestock and livelihoods in face of a natural disaster can be overwhelming. Check in with doctors, check in with neighbors, check in with family. Organizations like Farm Aid and Rural Minds, as well as Farm Bureau's "Farm State of Mind" campaign, offer farmers and ranchers important mental health support. No farm or ranch can run successfully without the mental and physical health of cattlemen and women.

Catastrophic wildfires have long timelines, not just for putting fires out but also for recovery. It can take years for the land to recover ecologically, not to mention the amount of time, mental endurance, hard work and money required to restart and rebuild. NCBA continues to work with partners and key legislators to find ways to reduce the potential for, as well as respond to, the dangers of wildfires to farmers, ranchers and the public at large.